

76-73991

28 May 1976

Mr. William P. Bundy
Foreign Affairs
58 East 68th Street
New York, New York 10021

Dear Bill:

Some time ago I promised you a reply to your thoughtful letter. It has taken longer than I expected because the concern you express inspired me to ask for a review of our situation.

Your thesis as we understand it is that the overt, analytic side of the Agency should be organizationally divorced from the clandestine. This would open the door to a reestablishment of close links between intelligence analysis and the intellectual resources of the universities. Confronting this, we have asked ourselves four questions. What is the present state of these relationships? What improvements could be achieved by the divorce you propose? What would be its costs? Would the costs be worth the gain?

Let me say at the beginning that our problem of standing with the "mainstream" is much narrower in one sense and much broader in another than you imply.

It is narrower because the opposition in principle to clandestine operations is aimed mainly at covert action, and is confined to a relatively small but highly articulate and influential group. These critics are strongest in the major universities, and strongest there in the Establishment ones. With a few exceptions, they represent the liberal arts and social sciences rather than the physical sciences, and within the social sciences they do not include many scholars of Communist societies. On the other hand, your "mainstream" strongly



influences the editorial (and the news) content of certain familiar publications, ones that are able to build a sort of prison of fashionable attitudes. When we deal with the currents of intellectual life outside prison walls, we find a great deal of support for the Agency and its mission.

On the other hand, the problem is much broader than intelligence. The "mainstream" has, to varying degrees, turned its back on defense and on foreign policy. A few will have nothing to do with government itself. A much greater number believe, with some justification, that our national energies should be concentrated on domestic problems. Their concern over intelligence issues is obviously great, partly because these issues epitomize for them the misdirection of American society. Nonetheless, it is more an expression of a broader legitimate debate over priorities and credibility than the underlying cause of the debate. We are convinced that acceptance by these people of the Agency, or of its present analytic component, as a respectable participant in American intellectual life must wait until they rediscover that guilt is no substitute for foreign policy in a less than benign world, and until they determine that it is respectable to participate and assist in national government. There are some encouraging signs that this is beginning to happen.

Even then, I concede, we will have problems, but not as great as you anticipate. The fact is that we have never been isolated from academia even during the worst of the recent period. In fact, we are less "monastic" now than we have ever been. The difference is that many of the people with whom we deal find it necessary to be circumspect if they are not to be hounded by the emotional and the trendy among their colleagues. For this reason you and many others are probably unaware just how deep and extensive these relationships are. They require the assignment of an officer full-time as Coordinator. Some examples, from the liberal arts and social sciences, at the risk of inflicting on you a statistic or two:

- You speak of the immense amount of contact that "used to exist" between the overt side and the universities. One Office alone, the Office of Political Research (formed when ONE was broken up), has maintained through all the nastiness of the past few years regular and active exchange:

Stanford, MIT, Amherst,
etc., with 39 senior
faculty;

- ° At Chicago, California,
Michigan, etc., with 41
senior faculty;
- ° At other institutions
(including 6 foreign)
with 32 senior faculty.
- You asked how long it has been since
a scholar from the outside joined the
Agency for a year or so. The answer
is that there are two such on board
now, and a third is about to join us.
- You note that our people used to be
able to go freely to academic centers.
This academic year we have 21 analysts
on sabbaticals at various universities.
Well over a hundred others, openly
identified as CIA, have attended 60
professional meetings (American Po-
litical Science Association, etc.)
and 30-40 presented papers or were
scheduled as discussants.
- OPR and the Offices of Economic and
Strategic Research all have panels of
distinguished scholars to review their
output and their programs. Many of
these people put in a good deal of
time at Langley.
- During the past two years, the Agency
conducted three symposia to bring intel-
ligence analysts together with academic
leaders in the development of new methods
of analysis in the social sciences. The
first dealt with a broad range of new
methodologies, the second and third with
the specific problems of elite analysis
and national leadership succession.
Nearly 50 scholars from almost as many
major universities participated. CIA
sponsorship of the symposia was openly
revealed, but only one person invited
hesitated because of that association.

-- We have a summer intern program for graduate students. This year we will take 74, one out of every nine applicants. Experience suggests that about half will end up as permanent employees.

I think it is in the long run even more important that we are making a major effort to break our product out of its security wrappings. There is already a respectable flow of unclassified or declassified CIA product to the academic world. We expect it to grow.

On the scientific side, by now at least as important as the traditional intelligence disciplines, our relations with the universities have always been close. In recent years our activities in science and technology have grown enormously. A great deal of our analytic work is directed at technological developments and weapon characteristics. Similarly, we are deeply involved in research and development in support of collection and information processing, not only in the obvious areas like photography but also in the integration of technology with clandestine collection.

We draw for these purposes on the full range of American intellectual resources, and few scientists have withheld co-operation. We have contracts with more than 35 senior scientific faculty at major universities, and that many more serve as consultants. Among them are some of the country's most distinguished, including several Nobel laureates. Moreover, we draw on, and depend on, the work done at these institutions, and at research institutes and think tanks. We have full membership in the American scientific community.

In our experience, all but the most hysterical of faculty and students are sophisticated enough to make a distinction between the overt and analytic and the covert and operational, however much they may disapprove of the latter. While our analysts on campus have a great deal of arguing to do, they are not held responsible by their academic colleagues for clandestine activities.

Nor has recruiting suffered. We have far more exceptional applicants than we can take. Many of those that have joined us in recent years are extraordinarily impressive, not only in academic terms but also in professional or military experience. Neither you nor I are in a position to compare these officers with those of whom you speak, but my colleagues who know both groups tell me our newer people measure up. You are quite right, however, that we are not getting from Harvard and Princeton the liberal arts

graduates at the top of their classes. I wish we were, but the fact is that in the 70's these people simply do not appear to be interested in federal service of any kind.

Academic stars aside, the general level of our professional force is much higher today than it was in the 50's. The proportion with graduate degrees (and from first-rate universities) has risen from about 20 to about 45 percent, while the number with no degree has dropped from 35 (!) to 5 percent.

The mass and often indiscriminate intake of professionals in the 50's will not be repeated. It provided many first-rate people, but it also saddled the Agency with a large number of third-raters. Virtually all of these have been eased out in the last few years. With a smaller but steady intake, we are able to be highly selective, a policy that is paying off in the depth of talent and experience available to us.

Adding this all up, we assess our academic relationships not to be in bad shape, especially when we consider the strains to which they have been subjected by largely irrelevant events. Obviously they can be improved. In particular we want to have the very best people from the very best schools competing to join us, and we would prefer that our associates on the campuses did not have to worry over the effect their association might have on their students or their peers. A divorce from the Clandestine Services might help, at least in the latter instance, but its effect on recruitment or on our ability to broaden our present substantive exchanges would be marginal. Any positive change must await fundamental change in the fashionable view of what an intellectual owes to his country, something which we in intelligence can influence very little.

What do we lose by separation of analysis from operations? In our view, a great deal. It is interesting that the Senate Select Committee and its staff opened hearings largely convinced that there should be a divorce and ended, grudgingly, much less convinced. Its recommendation (pp. 449-451, copy enclosed) finally was that the new Oversight Committee should "give consideration" to this idea. Its objective, moreover, was primarily to relieve the DCI of a potential conflict of interest. The Harvard University Institute of Politics, Study Group on Intelligence Activities, produced a paper on this subject which is also quoted in the Select Committee's report (pp. 528-532, copy enclosed). I think the Study Group has the equities about right, especially in the dangers of placing the DDO in State or Defense, or of trying to maintain it in an independent position.

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gives even more weight, however, on the interdependence of the Operations, Intelligence, and Science and Technology Directorates. As you remember, the linkage between the analyst and the clandestine collector was once tenuous indeed. It is still not as close as we would like it, but year by year it improves.

In your letter you treat only with the substantive contribution that the collector can make. I think you downplay far too much the value of lengthy, on-the-scene immersion in a nation's politics, but there is an even more important consideration. We desperately need clandestine collection, but it is complicated and dangerous. We cannot afford to have it operate in a vacuum if it is to operate with reasonable efficiency and minimum risk. It must therefore be closely linked to the analysis function. The greatest value of this relationship, however, comes from the contribution of the analyst, not of the collector. The collector learns from the analyst what sources to seek and what questions to ask. He gets a continuous evaluation of his product. The analyst in turn gets a clear picture of the reliability and access of sources, and he can ask the follow-up questions. Thus, the collection process can be steered to make it more responsive to national requirements, and to make the ultimate product substantially more reliable.

I spoke earlier of the integration of technology and clandestine collection. The scientist who develops an advanced sensor, the clandestine officer who emplaces it, and the analyst who defines the requirement for it and depends on its success are all members of a single team. Experience indicates that the efficiency and responsiveness of collection suffers when it is organizationally and geographically separated from analysis. In the broadest sense, I see my managerial job is to make the Intelligence Community more "communal," to seek greater integration and cooperation among all its components. Fragmentation is not the answer.

In sum, we come out with different answers from yours on the four questions posed earlier. First, our external relationships in this country, while hardly ideal, are not in bad shape. Certainly they have not been so damaged that radical surgery is essential. Second, we doubt that the surgery you propose would cure the patient; our particular difficulties are symptoms of a more general malady. Third, we rate the costs and risks of the operation considerably higher than you do. Finally, as we add these answers up in May 1976, the costs do not seem worth the gains.

One additional point. I think you will find that the concept of an analytic function independent of policymaking is firmly lodged in doctrine. Our officers from top to bottom take

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it seriously indeed. Had I any mind to change it (thus breaking a heartfelt pledge made at my Senate confirmation hearings), I would lose our best people by platoons. Nor are they unaware that they have no monopoly on knowledge and wisdom. They are encouraged to face outward, to seek information and advice wherever it may be had, and to engage in informed debate with their lay colleagues. And this exchange, even in these harried times, continues to be fruitful.

I do not wish to appear complacent, however. We have not had time to assess the impact on the public of the Select Committee's report. Its treatment of our relationships with academia has already produced some negative noises in academic circles. In any case, there is no question that the nation's confidence in its intelligence service has been shaken; restoration of that confidence is my highest priority.

For now, our emphasis is on seeking greater understanding in the Congress and the press. After a few months, we will take another look. If organizational measures look sensible, we'll take them. As you point out, these are not things to be rushed.

Again, many thanks for your letter. As you can see, we take these questions seriously. And it is healthy that we can debate them seriously with our distinguished alumni. I hope we can count on your continued advice and support.

Sincerely,

George Bush
Director

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Enclosures

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